

Mapping a Life: The Biography Timeline

Learning objective: To understand the chronological structure of a biography and the importance of key life events.

Ellie the elephant has been researching the life of a famous historical inventor. She has jumbled up the timeline of events. Read the scrambled facts below, then sort them into the correct chronological order (1 to 6) to build a biography. Once ordered, explain why you chose that specific sequence.

Word bank: Chronological · Biography · Timeline · Achievement · Milestone · Legacy

1. 1. He moved to the city to study engineering at university. 2. He was born in a small village in 1850. 3. He received a national award for his invention. 4. He began his first apprenticeship in a local workshop. 5. He passed away at the age of 82. 6. He invented a machine that helped farmers harvest crops more quickly. (6 marks)

2. Why is it important for a biographer to put events in chronological order? (2 marks)

3. Which event in the list above would you consider the biggest 'milestone' and why? (2 marks)

4. If you were writing a biography, which person from history would you choose to research? (1 mark)

5. What is one 'fact' you would need to find out about your chosen person to start their biography? (1 mark)

Draw: Draw a 'Life Map' for your chosen historical figure. Use a long, winding path and draw three important symbols along the path that represent the biggest moments in their life (e.g., a book for their education, a tool for their invention, or a medal for their success).

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw a 'Life Map' for a historical figure. The box is currently blank.

Extension challenge: Interview a grandparent or an older person you know. Ask them for three important dates in their life. Write a short paragraph (3-4 sentences) about them using the 'past tense' and putting their events in chronological order.